

OPLA Staff Works on Year's First Public Act

It's not every year that Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs staff works on a bill that becomes the first public act signed by the Governor, but that's what happened in 2009. The bill was House Bill 4239, which was sponsored by Representative Constan. The original version of the bill was intended to bring the Michigan Employment Security Act's confidentiality provisions into conformity with federal law. The House added another section to take advantage of an opportunity offered by the recently-enacted federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which suspended the interest on loans by the federal government to state unemployment trust funds for two years. The new section added by the House suspended the Solvency Tax on certain businesses, which the law required Michigan to impose to pay the now suspended interest. The House passed the bill unanimously and the Senate followed suit about a week later. The Governor signed the bill surrounded by legislative leaders and representatives of business and labor groups. The bill was filed as Public Act 1 the day after the bill was passed by the Senate and enrolled by the House.